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1954
KESWICK Urban District Council


ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health,
John Patterson, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.

FOR THE YEAR 1954

Together with the Summary of Work
of the Sanitary Inspector.



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KESWICK URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
KESWICK URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my first Annual Report as Medical Officer of Health to the Keswick Urban District, for the year 1954.

My appointment, which is jointly with Cockermouth Urban and Rural District and the Cumberland County Council was from 1st December, 1954, and although but a recent arrival in the district, my varying duties with these Authorities, in particular the medical inspection in schools, have given me a more intimate knowledge of the area and its people than would have been possible with any one authority in so short a time.

My thanks are due to the members of the Council and to the Clerk to the Council and his staff for their unfailing kindness and in particular to Mr. R. Lusher, Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector, for his help in my first year with your Council.

I am,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN PATTERSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area (acres), 1,272.

Registrar-General's estimate of resident population (mid 1953)
4,740 (see page 4).

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1953), according to rate books,
1585.

Rateable Value, £37,988.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate, £151 5s. 5d.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR

		Total			M.	F.		
Live Births	{ Legitimate	44	23	21	Live Birth Rate (R.-G.)	9.2	per 1,000 of the population.	
	{ Illegitimate	0	0	0				
Still births		0	0	0	Still Birthrate per 1,000 total (live and still) Births, nil.			

		Total M. F.				
Deaths		58	24	34	Crude Death Rate (R.G.)	12.2
	per 1,000 of estimated resident population.					

Maternal Mortality :—

Deaths from Puerperal Causes (Childbirth) :

		Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total live & still Births.
Puerperal Sepsis	...	0	nil.
Other Puerperal Causes	...	0	nil.
Total		0	nil.

Infantile Mortality :—

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age	...	...	...	...	nil.
Death Rate „ „ „	...	...	...	...	...
All infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	...	...	nil.
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	...	...	...	nil.
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	...	...	nil.
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	0	
„ Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	0	
„ Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	...	...	...	0	
„ Cancer	...	...	...	11	

KESWICK URBAN DISTRICT.

ANNUAL REPORT of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1954.

The area of the district in statute acres (land and inland water) is 1,272.

Social conditions and local industries remain as hitherto.

The Urban District of Keswick is included in the Lake District National Park (which was designated as such by the Parks Commissioners, January, 1951, and confirmed by the Minister concerned, May, 1951).

Meteorological Conditions:—These are shown in a report by Mr. Tom Wilson, Official Observer to the Meteorological Office and Air Ministry, and given at the end of this Report.

POPULATION

The population figure of 4770 is given for the year 1953 by the Registrar-General and called by him the "Home Population" (i.e.—as in 1952) ; on this figure the birth and death rates and the incidence of notifiable diseases are based.

N.B.—The population figure for 1953 was 4,740.

VITAL STATISTICS—BIRTHS

Live-Births—There were 44 Live Births (23 males and 21 females) registered as belonging to the district ; of these none were illegitimate.

The Live Birth Rate was accordingly 9.2 per 1,000 of the population, compared with 43 births and a rate of 9.0 for the previous year.

Comparisons may be given as follows :—

Birth Rates, 1954—Cumberland	...	...	...	16.4
Rural Districts of Cumberland				15.7
Urban Districts of Cumberland				17.5
England and Wales	...	...		15.2
Keswick Urban District	...			9.2

As regards Births and Deaths the Registrar-General has supplied Area Comparability Factors—these allow for the differing age and sex distribution of the population in different areas and are used for comparing birth rates and death rates with those in other areas. The factor for births is 1.00, the birth rate, therefore, remaining at 9.2

CAUSES OF DEATH IN 1954

Causes of Death					Male	Female
All Causes					24	34
1.	Tuberculosis, Respiratory	...	...	...	1	...
2.	Tuberculosis, Other	...	...	...	...	...
3.	Syphilitic Disease	...	...	...	...	...
4.	Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...
5.	Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...
6.	Meningo-coccal infections	...	...	...	...	...
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	...
8.	Measles	...	...	...	...	...
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	...	...	...	...	...
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	...	...	...	2	4
11.	„ „ lung, bronchus	...	...	...	1	...
12.	„ „ breast	...	...	...	...	...
13.	„ „ uterus	...	...	...	...	1
14.	Other Malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	...	...	...	1	1
15.	Leukoemia, aleukoemia	...	...	...	...	1
16.	Diabetes	...	...	...	...	1
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	...	...	...	4	4
18.	Coronary Disease, angina	...	...	...	4	8
19.	Hypertension with Heart Disease	...	...	...	1	6
20.	Other Heart Disease	...	...	...	2	6
21.	Other circulatory disease	...	...	...	...	...
22.	Influenza	...	...	...	...	...
23.	Pneumonia	...	...	...	1	...
24.	Bronchitis	...	...	...	1	...
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	1
26.	Ulcer of Stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	...
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	...	...	...	...	...
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	...	...	...
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	...	...	...
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...	...	...	...	...
31.	Congenital malformations	...	...	...	...	...
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	...	...	...	3	...
33.	Motor Vehicle accidents	...	...	...	1	...
34.	All other accidents	...	...	...	1	2
35.	Suicide	...	...	...	1	...
36.	Homicide and operations of war	...	...	...	...	...
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age—Total					Nil	Nil

						Males	Females
Live Births	{	Total	...	...	...	23	21
		Legitimate		...	...	23	21
		Illegitimate		...	...	—	—
Still Births	{	Total	...	...	...	—	—
		Legitimate		...	...	—	—
		Illegitimate		...	...	—	—
Population (for Births and Deaths)—1954—R.G.							4,770

Still Births—No still birth was registered, so that the Still Birth Rate, therefore, was nil per 1,000 of the population as compared with one still birth with a rate of 0.85 in 1953.

The Still Birth Rate per 1,000 total live and still births was nil as compared with 22.7 in 1953.

DEATHS

The number of deaths registered as belonging to Keswick was 58 (1953—52). This gives a crude death rate of 12.2 per 1,000 of the population, as compared with 10.9 for the previous year.

The comparability factor given for adjusting the crude death rate (for reasons explained under Births) is 0.79. The adjusted death rate for Keswick Urban District was, therefore, 9.6.

Comparisons of crude and adjusted death rates are shown below :

					Crude	Adjusted
Death Rates, 1954 :						
Cumberland	...	...	...	...	11.9	—
Rural Districts of Cumberland	...	...	...	...	12.1	—
Urban Districts of Cumberland	...	...	...	...	11.4	—
England and Wales	...	...	...	...	11.3	—
Keswick Urban District	...	...	...	...	12.2	9.6

INFANTILE MORTALITY

No deaths occurred among infants under one year of age, so that the Infantile Mortality Rate was nil per 1,000 births, as compared with 23.2 in 1953.

No illegitimate infant death occurred, so that the illegitimate Infantile Mortality Rate per 1,000 illegitimate births, therefore, was nil. Similarly the Legitimate Infantile Mortality Rate per 1,000 legitimate births, was nil.

These latter rates were both nil and 24 respectively, for the previous year.

Comparisons may be given as follows :—

Infantile Mortality Rates, 1954 :—

Cumberland	...	...	(approximately)	...	27.6
Rural Districts of Cumberland	...	...	...	...	29.6
Urban Districts of Cumberland	...	...	...	...	24.9
England and Wales	...	...	...	...	25.5
Keswick Urban District	...	...	...	...	Nil

SENILE DEATH RATE

44 persons had attained the age of 65 years or upwards. This number represents a Senile Death Rate of 75.8 per cent. of the total deaths, as compared with 57.6 for 1953 and 73.5 for 1952.

Out of the 65 deaths :—

10 (5m. 5f.)	persons died between the ages of 65 and 70 years
13 (4m. 9f.)	70 and 75 years
13 (4m. 9f.)	75 and 80 years
6 (1m. 5f.)	80 and 85 years
2 (2m.)	85 and 90 years

VIOLENCE

The death rate due to violence (all forms) was 0.84 per 1,000 of the population in the Keswick Urban District. Below will be seen the number of deaths from Suicide, Road Traffic Accidents, Other Violence and the Total Violence Deaths, together with the percentages of the total deaths from all causes, and the death rates from each per 1,000 of the population, as compared with the previous year.

	Suicide		Road Traffic Acc.		Other Violence excluding Road Traffic Acc.		Total Violence	
	1954	1953	1954	1953	1954	1953	1954	1953
Deaths	1	—	1	—	3	4	5	4
% of all causes ...	1.7	—	1.7	—	5.1	7.69	8.6	7.69
Death Rate per 1,000 population ...	.21	—	.21	—	.63	.84	1.05	.84

The three deaths labelled "other violence" followed fractures of bones in elderly persons caused by falls, 2 in the home and one on the highway.

CANCER

Cancer proved fatal in 11 cases as follows :—

System	Primary Organ	Males	Females	Total
Alimentary	Stomach	2	4	6
	Colon	1	—	1
Respiratory	Bronchus	1	—	1
Reproductive	Uterus	—	1	1
Glandular	Thyroid	—	1	1
Other		—	1	1

This number corresponds to a cancer death rate of 2.3 per 1,000 of the population, as compared with 6 deaths and a rate of 1.28 in 1953.

Approximately out of every 5 deaths of persons belonging to this district 1 was due to cancer (last year 1 in 9).

TUBERCULOSIS

(Vide also page 14)

There was one death attributed to tuberculosis :—

			Males	Females
Respiratory System	...	...	1	0
Non-Pulmonary	...	...	0	0

The Tuberculosis (all forms) death rate, therefore, was .21 per 1,000 of the population compared with .21 in 1953.

This can also be said for the death rate for Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

1. Part-time Medical Officer of Health.
2. One Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Ralph Lusher, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., being also the Surveyor and Water Engineer.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES

In accordance with the National Health Service Act, 1946, the County Council is the authority responsible for this important public service, taking over in 1948. Under their comprehensive Ambulance Scheme for Cumberland, adequate provision has been made for this district.

Speaking generally, other particulars relating to Health Services (e.g., Hospitals, Nursing, Maternity, etc.) remain more or less unchanged.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

WATER SUPPLY

The yield from the various supplies continued to be adequate at all times.

Chlorination was continued during the year.

Twelve samples of water were submitted for analysis during the year, eleven of these were regarded by the analyst as highly satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory.

The water is soft in character and lead pipes are not used owing to the liability of plumbo solvency. Copper service pipes are used throughout the district.

With the exception of 8 houses at High Briery, where there is a standpipe, all premises have a piped supply.

A new screen chamber house was built at the Millbeck Intake and is a great improvement on the previous chamber which was below ground level and allowed access of surface water and leaves.

etc., during times of heavy rain. In the new screen chamber the water passes through one coarse screen and two fine screens and the whole chamber is designed so that it can be easily cleansed without risk of contamination of the water.

Concrete-lined spun-iron pipes are used when new mains are laid, in order that incrustation may be prevented. This policy over the past twenty-one years has given much satisfaction; the water, of course, is not affected.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

No major extension of the sewerage system was carried out.

As pointed out in previous annual reports, the sedimentation tanks and filters at the Outfall Works are inadequate to treat properly the amount of sewage passing through and the effluent from the works remains unsatisfactory.

This position is made still more difficult by the lack of proper sludge drying beds. At the time of writing this report the efficiency of the existing work is impaired as several of the tanks cannot be properly cleaned because there is no means of drying the sludge.

SCAVENGING AND REMOVAL OF REFUSE

Two Karrier Bantam refuse wagons are employed, but one of these is used part-time on other work. Very few complaints are received and this service is generally satisfactory.

The system of disposal of refuse has been greatly improved during the year. The refuse tip has been reorganised and a full-time attendant is now in control of the tip.

Salvage of waste paper was continued and just over 63 tons of paper was baled and sold to the paper mills at Langwathby for £485 approximately.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT

Summary supplied by the Sanitary Inspector to the Medical Officer of Health, in pursuance of Article XIX of the Sanitary Officers' Order, 1926.

Premises inspected during the year	...	...	...	125
Nuisances or defects discovered	...	...	...	32
Do.	do.	remedied after informal notice		32
Do.	do.	remedied after statutory notice		0
Housing Inspections under Public Health or Housing Acts				98
Factory Inspections	...	...	...	15

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

A total of 20 inspections were made by the Sanitary Inspector, and the 2 defects revealed were remedied by informal action. The following table shows the position in this district at the end of 1954 :

Premises	Number	Inspec- tions	Defects Found	Written Notices	Defects Remedied	Prose- cutions
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	17	10	—	—	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	43	14	3	0	—	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	60	24	3	—	—	—

(Section 1 refers to Cleanliness, 2 to overcrowding, 3 Temperature, 4 Ventilation, 6 Drainage of Floors, and 7 Sanitary Conveniences).

The above figures include 6 bakehouses.

Outworkers—Nil.

SHOPS ACT, 1934

Periodical Inspections were made by the Sanitary Inspector. No action was taken during the year.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

This Act came into force on 31st March, 1950, and superceded the Rats and Mice Destruction Act. Under the new Act full responsibility devolves upon the Council as far as the Urban Area is concerned.

The Council employees undertake treatment as recommended. The sewers were treated several times during the year and the refuse tip was treated 12 times; treatments were also carried out at 41 private houses and 3 business premises.

HOUSING

Twenty-three new Council houses were completed and occupied and a further eighteen houses were in course of erection on the new housing site at Latrigg Close, formerly known as Browfoot. Roads, sewers and watermains were also completed for the whole of the site.

The total number of Council houses now completed since the war is 135.

Ten Private Enterprise houses were completed and occupied during 1954 bringing the total of new private houses completed since the war to 58.

HOUSING APPENDIX

STATISTICS

1.—Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year :—

1. (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	84
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	95
2. (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above (which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 and 1932)	0
(b) Number of Inspections made for the purpose ...	0
3. Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	0
4. Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	0

2.—Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notices : Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	50
---	----

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

MILK SUPPLY

...

There were fourteen registered milk sellers, six of these being producers and retailers, whose premises were in the Urban District. Inspections continued to be made periodically.

A large quantity of the town's milk supply is retailed by producers whose premises are situated in the surrounding Rural District. There were 6 of such producer-retailers during 1953.

Four licences have been issued for the selling of Designated Milk in the Keswick Urban District.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.—The regular use of the two licensed Slaughter-Houses by the Ministry of Food ended on 12th August, 1950. After this date, dead meat was transported here from the Maryport abattoir.

SCARLET FEVER.—There were no cases of Scarlet Fever notified. The case rate and death rate were respectively nil and nil per 1,000 of the population.

DIPHTHERIA.—There were again no notifications of Diphtheria; the case rate and death rates, therefore, respectively, were nil.

The immunisation campaign against Diphtheria was continued as before. Most of the inoculations were given at the Crosthwaite Parish Room after advertising, etc., as previously.

During the year under review 8 elementary school children, 5 to 14 years, and 21 infants under 5 years were known to have been given primary injections (two at intervals of a few weeks), several by their own private doctors.

101 children received a single re-inforcing dose (these are children who received the two primary doses 4 to 5 years previously).

The co-operation of the local medical practitioners, head teachers, the District Nurses and, particularly, that of the County Health Visitor, Miss Horn, is hereby gratefully acknowledged.

It is considered essential to reiterate that sustained effort must continue to be made by all concerned to achieve the level of immunisation necessary among children generally and particularly in regard to infants under one year of age in the 0 to 5 years group.

PUERPERAL PYREXIA.—No notifications received again; the case rate for this disease (including Puerperal Fever) was, therefore, nil per 1,000 total (live and still) births registered during the year, the same as in 1953.

Again no maternal deaths occurred—corresponding, therefore, to a Maternity Mortality Rate of nil per 1,000 total (live and still) births, the same as in 1953.

PNEUMONIA.—No notification was received; but one death was registered from Pneumonia (all forms).

ACUTE POLIOMYELITIS.—No cases of Poliomyelitis occurred during 1954.

There were again no notifications of Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis and, similar to the previous year, there were none of Typhoid (including Para-Typhoid) Fever, Encephalitis Lethargica, or Ophthalmia Neonatorum.

TUBERCULOSIS.—Under the Tuberculosis Regulations, 3 cases (females) of Pulmonary were notified, one belonging to an outside district, and 2 (females) of Other Forms of Tuberculosis. One Pulmonary case was admitted to Sanatorium.

The following table gives the number of New Cases and Mortality (all cases) during 1954 :—

Age	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—10	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
10—15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—20	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
20—25	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—55	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 & upwards	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Totals	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	0

A statement regarding the total deaths from Tuberculosis will be found on page 2.

The number of cases on the Tuberculosis Register at the end of 1954 was as follows :—

	Males	Females	Total
Pulmonary	13	14	27
Non-Pulmonary	4	6	10
All Cases	17	20	37

No action has been required to be taken under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, which relates to powers regarding persons suffering from Tuberculosis of the Respiratory Tract, and in an infectious state and employed in connection with a dairy or the handling of milk or milk vessels.

With reference to the Public Health Act, 1925, Section 62, regarding compulsory removal to hospital or institution, no action has been taken.

Non - NOTIFIABLE ACUTE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—Epidemics usually occur in conjunction with epidemics in the districts adjoining.

Influenza was prevalent only in mild degree during the year under review, and no death was attributed to this disease, so that the influenza death rate was Nil per 1,000 of the population, the same as in 1953.

Re Measles and Whooping Cough (which became notifiable as from 1st November, 1939)—There were no cases of measles notified but 3 of Whooping Cough.

The case rates of Measles and Whooping Cough (as per notification) were, therefore, Nil and .63 per 1,000 of the population.

No death occurred from either Measles or Whooping Cough (as in the previous year), the death rates were, therefore, again Nil per 1,000 of the population respectively.

There were no school closures due to epidemic diseases during the year.

METEOROLOGICAL STATION

Height above sea level, 254 ft. Lat. 54° 36'N Long. 3° 9'W

RETURNS FOR 1954

Month	RAINFALL				SUNSHINE			
	Amount	Ins. Days	Average	51 years	Amount	Hrs. Days	Average	51 years
January	...	4.58 on 17	...	6.20	...	32.1 on 15	...	33.8
February	...	4.77 on 17	...	4.52	...	48.2 on 17	...	53.4
March	...	3.68 on 17	...	3.81	...	118.6 on 25	...	101.4
April	...	1.16 on 7	...	3.24	...	174.5 on 26	...	133.0
May	...	4.05 on 15	...	3.37	...	162.5 on 26	...	180.3
June	...	5.26 on 21	...	3.21	...	115.0 on 20	...	179.1
July	...	5.47 on 25	...	4.22	...	102.4 on 28	...	153.2
August	...	5.87 on 24	...	5.17	...	101.8 on 27	...	139.0
September	...	10.40 on 28	...	5.13	...	100.0 on 28	...	116.4
October	...	13.58 on 26	...	6.12	...	48.7 on 20	...	79.5
November	...	13.22 on 24	...	5.80	...	43.1 on 19	...	46.4
December	...	8.46 on 26	...	6.50	...	9.1 on 7	...	27.3
Totals	...	80.50 on 247				1056.0 on 258		

Average Annual Rainfall, 52 years, 57.83.

Average Annual Sunshine Hours, 52 years, 1240.0.

TEMPERATURES

Highest Maximum (in screen)	Lowest Minimum (in screen)	Lowest Minimum (on grass)	Ave. Daily Temp.	Nights Frost	Wind at Gale Force	Snow Lying
51 on 15th	22 on 8th	15 on 8th	36.5	16	1	1
53 on 21st	14 on 2nd	9 on 2nd	38.0	18	—	4
58 on 11, 12	9 on 1st	7 on 1st	39.9	12	1	3
60 on 17th	31 on 6th	23 on 7th	46.0	11	—	—
73 on 31st	32 on 1st	26 on 1st	52.0	1	—	—
74 on 3rd	40 on 13th	39 on 13th	55.3	—	—	—
68 on 12th	39 on 6th	33 on 6th	56.2	—	—	—
70 on 26th	45 on 26th	41 on 26th	57.0	—	—	—
75 on 1st	36 on 28th	29 on 27th	53.3	1	3	—
65 on 3rd	29 on 26th	22 on 26th	44.1	2	—	—
54 on 27th	27 on 17th	21 on 17th	44.0	6	3	—
59 on 1st	27 on 7th	18 on 7th	42.8	9	4	—
Average Daily Temperature			47.1	76	12	8

Month	EARTH TEMPERATURES				WIND (at Observation Hour, 0.900 hrs.)				
	High- est 1 ft.	Low- est 1 ft.	High- est 4 ft.	Low- est 4 ft.	Calm	Quad rant North	Quad rant S'th	Quad rant East	Quad rant West
January	... 43.0	34.0	47.0	41.0	11	3	7	3	7
February	... 41.0	32.5	43.5	40.2	14	5	5	2	2
March	... 45.0	34.0	43.0	42.2	10	1	8	5	7
April	... 49.5	43.0	46.0	43.0	7	7	7	6	3
May	... 53.8	46.2	50.2	46.0	6	11	7	5	2
June	... 58.0	53.5	54.0	50.5	9	4	8	5	4
July	... 60.5	55.6	55.7	53.8	9	4	3	—	15
August	... 60.1	56.1	56.4	55.5	16	4	3	3	5
September	... 59.5	50.0	56.3	54.2	9	2	7	1	11
October	... 55.2	48.3	54.0	53.0	10	2	2	1	16
November	... 49.3	41.9	52.5	48.0	11	2	8	1	8
December	... 47.4	39.9	47.5	45.0	7	2	6	—	16
Totals	....	...	....		119	47	71	32	96

ABNORMAL PRECIPITATION

Nov. 2nd and 3rd, 1931	6.16 inches in 36 hours
November 3rd, 1931	4.86 ,,
November 12th, 1938	3.37 ,,
November 4th, 1926	3.30 ,, in 9½ hours
December 24th, 1925	3.52 ,,
August 2nd, 1923	3.60 ,,
July 13th, 1932	2.56 ,, in 5 hours
December 2nd, 1902	3.12 ,,

SUNDRY NOTES

Lightning observed	... ..	8 days
Thunder heard	... ..	6 days
Thunderstorm with precipitation	...	6 days
Visibility less than 1,000 yards	...	9 days
More than one inch of rain fell on	...	17 days
Warmest day — June 3rd	... ..	74.0
Coldest day — March 1st	... ..	9.0
Lowest Minimum (on Grass), March 1st		7.0

WEATHER OF 1954

The first known rainfall records for Keswick were kept by Peter Crosthwaite for the period 1788 to 1792, in conjunction with Dr. Dalton, one of Britain's greatest Chemists, who introduced to scientific research the Atomic Theory.

This period of five years included 1792 which yielded a catch of 84.6 inches, thus giving an average of 64.5 for Keswick and 68.54 for Kendal where Dr. Dalton was conducting experiments. These high averages were the cause of Keswick and Kendal having to carry for many years the stigma of being the two wettest towns in the country. They are credited with being among the first (with London) to keep rainfall measurement. Yet though the records of the two northern towns were abnormally high, that of London at 15 inches was a gross understatement. From 1852 gauges were kept continuously, first on the summit of Crow Park, later in the town and are now kept at High Hill.

Modern equipment, methods of measurements and exposure, have tended to reduce the average as a consequence. The abnormal total of 84.6 in 1792 and 83.5 in 1872 on Crow Park is comparable with 80.5 in 1954 at High Hill.

The high incidence of the rainfall just experienced is attributed by some to scientific causes, Atom and Hydrogen research, Wireless Rays, etc., yet we have records of equally high readings long ago. Some people are of the opinion "that you cannot muck about with the elements without untoward results," and it may be some consolation to followers of this theory to know that when Dr. Dalton, Peter Crosthwaite and Jonathon Otley were experimenting with their theories, we got our previous high records. I personally do not attribute the Atomic Theory as having any connection.

With the high rainfall, it followed that the amount of bright sunshine was less and we lost 180 hours as a consequence. December gave us just 9 hours which fact I have little doubt, will flash from the White Cliffs of Dover to the Lizards and the South Coast resorts will find great consolation by comparison.

JANUARY. Seasonable weather with fog, frost, gales, hail and a little snow, also a short fine spell. A good variety but only samples.

FEBRUARY. Commenced with frost, a little skating, a covering of snow lay for a few days on the fells and low ground. A spell of rain cleared the snow, but wintry conditions returned.

MARCH. Small falls of snow in first week, followed by a fine spell and a showery fortnight gave promise of a good spring.

APRIL. The good spring develops, a fine dry month. Old Moore running round for wise cracks about a fine warm summer. Weather wise farmers scratching their heads trying to remember what Dad said in 58 or was it 59? "Ifs" and "buts" accompany their prognostications.

MAY. Another fine warm month. Bees swarm early. A good honey harvest is to be expected every 25 years—is this it?

JUNE. "One swallow doth not a summer make." A wet month, only nine fine days.

JULY. Another wet month. Beekeepers looking for clover and bees join in search.

AUGUST. Another wet month, much grass uncut. Heather on hills poor and unproductive.

SEPTEMBER. A very wet month, 28 wet days. Hay still in cock. Harvest under water. "Old Moore" loses his memory. The farmers their tempers.

OCTOBER. Floods everywhere, main roads flooded on 18th and 19th, also 23rd and 29th.

NOVEMBER. More rain and still more floods.

DECEMBER. Rain, Rain, Rain, and still more floods. Portinscale and Stormwater Bridges damaged, the former probably irreparably.

Derwentwater reaches highest known level.

Gales, sleet, hail, everything except an earthquake.

The last three days of the year were fine and dry. On the eve of 1954's departure the horned moon looked down on the valley: it slowly sank through the Whinlatter gap as the year passed. The tolling of the tenor bell at Crosthwaite echoed from mountain and hill. The New Year was heralded by a merry peal from the tower at the Old Church, the moon sank from sight, peaceful and serene (yet I imagined a lift of the eyebrows as he looked over the fields at the unharvested crops), while the message of the bells "Peace and Goodwill" remains, and we hope for the best.





